

NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
ETHICAL BEHAVIOR
POLICY #AG-1-HR-13

PURPOSE:

This policy is intended to provide guidance to Department of Agriculture officials and employees in order to establish ethical boundaries for their actions in the conduct of Department business.

POLICY:

It is the policy of the Department of Agriculture that all employees maintain high standards of honesty, integrity, impartiality, and conduct to ensure the proper performance of department business and maintain the public's confidence.

SCOPE:

This policy shall apply to all employees in the Department.

REFERENCES:

Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) 281 A, Ethics in Government, Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) 284.746 through 284.770, the Governor's Executive Order 2011-02, and the Department's Prohibitions and Penalties.

RESPONSIBILITY:

1. The Employee shall be responsible for:
 - a. Complying with the requirements of this policy.
2. Each Supervisor shall be responsible for:
 - a. Informing current incumbent employees periodically of the content and intent of this policy.
 - b. Taking disciplinary action when an employee is in violation of this policy.
3. Agency Human Resource Services (AHRS) shall be responsible for:
 - a. Providing assistance to supervisors and employees in the interpretation and explanation of this policy.
 - b. Assisting management in determining action to be taken if an employee violates this policy.

PROCEDURES:

1. Employees shall follow the ethics requirements as written in Executive Order 2011-02, "Establishing Ethics Requirements for Certain Public Officers and

Employees”, which states in part: “High ethical standards are essential in maintaining the integrity of public officers and employees’ commitment to the public. Public confidence in government is strengthened by ethical standards that assure decisions are made with the interests of the public at large in mind”.

- a. A public officer or employee covered by this order is prohibited from accepting a gift or other compensation, either directly or indirectly, that might be intended to influence or reward the individual in the performance of official business.
 - b. The term “gift” includes any gratuity, favor, discount, entertainment, hospitality, loan, forbearance, or other item having monetary value. It includes services as well as gifts of training, transportation, local travel, lodgings and meals, whether provided in-kind, by purchase of a ticket, payment in advance, or reimbursement after the expense has been incurred.
 - c. In addition to the prohibition on gifts, the Director and Division Heads shall ensure that those who do business with the State of Nevada and those who receive grant funds from the State of Nevada are notified of Nevada’s ethics requirements upon their initial contact with the State or as soon as practicable thereafter.
2. Additionally, NAC 284.746 through 284.770, describe specific activities that violate ethical standards and in which state employees are prohibited. The following activities include, but are not all inclusive of possible ethics violations:
 - a. No employee may seek or accept any gift, service, favor, employment, engagement, emolument or economic opportunity that would tend improperly to influence a reasonable person in his position to depart from the faithful and impartial discharge of his public duties.
 - b. No employee may use his position in government to secure or grant unwarranted privileges, preferences, exemptions or advantages for himself, any member of his household, any business entity with which he or a member of his household is associated, or any other person.
 - c. An employee shall not enter into a private contract with the State in any capacity that may be construed as an extension of his assigned duties or responsibilities to the State.
 - d. If an employee acquires, through his public duties or relationships, any information which by law or practice is not at the time available to people generally, he may not use the information to further the economic interests of himself or any other person or business entity.

- e. No employee may suppress any governmental report or other document because it might unfavorably affect his private financial interest.
 - f. No employee may directly or indirectly solicit or receive, or be in any manner concerned in soliciting or receiving, any assessment, subscription, monetary or non-monetary contribution for a political purpose from anyone who is in the same department and who is a subordinate of the solicitor.
 - g. No employee may engage in political activity during the hours of his state employment to improve the chances of a political party or a person seeking office, or at any time engage in political activity to secure a preference for a promotion, transfer or increase in pay.
3. This policy does not limit the application of NRS 281A or any other provision of State or Federal law. Employees unsure of whether an activity may be an ethical violation may seek an opinion from the Commission on Ethics.

POLICY COMMUNICATION:

All new employees of the Department of Agriculture will receive a copy of this policy and will sign an acknowledgement that they have read and understand the conditions within. Supervisors will ensure all currently assigned employees are aware of the requirements of this policy. Employees needing clarification should contact AHRS or the Commission on Ethics for more information.

DIRECTOR'S POLICY AUTHORIZATION:

 Jim R. Barbee, Director

_____ Date

APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE ON

_____. Effective Date

This policy is not a substitute for relevant law or regulation nor does it establish additional rights beyond those provided in law and regulation. This policy is intended to be used in conjunction with the state law and the Rules for State Personnel Administration (NRS & NAC 284).